AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the Abstract as follows, without prejudice or disclaimer to continued examination on the merits:

An apparatus and method for detecting and suppressing corrupted data frames transported from a SONET network to a receiver utilizing the SOF frame indicator to manage the buffer-to-buffer credit count. By verifying the integrity of the SOF frame indicator prior to forwarding it to the client receiver the apparatus and method ensure that the buffer-to-buffer credit count integrity is maintained while avoiding the introduction of latency. ~~A frame-de-encapsulation component produces data frames compatible with the receiver from SONET frames input thereto and outputs the receiver-compatible data frames. An idle-frame signal generator generates idle-frame signals. A Start-of-Frame (SOF) indicator detector detects a Start-of-Frame indicator in each data frame output from the frame-de-encapsulation component, determines whether the Start-of-Frame indicator is valid or corrupted and produces an output signal indicative of that determination. A multiplexer selects, for output to the receiver, one of a first and a second signal input thereto on the basis of the output signal produced by the Start-of-Frame (SOF) indicator detector, the first input signal being a current data frame and the second input signal being an idle-frame signal, whereby the first input signal is selected when the output signal produced by the Start-of-Frame (SOF) indicator detector indicates that the Start-of-Frame indicator is valid and the second input signal is selected when the output signal produced by the Start-of-Frame (SOF) indicator detector indicates that the Start-of-Frame indicator is corrupted.~~